

**St. Ann's Provincialate
B – 43, Cariappa Road
Bolarum – 500 010
Secunderabad
Telangana**

24th February 2019



'Cleanliness is next to Godliness'

Dearest Sisters,

This is what reverberates in our hearts and minds when we ruminate on the life of our beloved Sr. Carmelita who was an authentic noble legend and good fruit bearing tree. As she lived so she died and as she desired so she received. Sr. Carmelita was a systematic, punctual, tidy and organized person. It was a proof of her love for God and others and for her responsibilities. She was an ideal person who loved and was ready to sacrifice anything to remain faithful to her commitment, and manifested a special love for the Congregation. She desired and earnestly prayed to have good death, so she received.

Sr. Carmalita (MARIA LIBANIA) D'Souza, was one of the three Children born on 6th September 1935 at Nadora, Bardez, Goa, to her pious parents Mr. Santan Xavier D'Souza and Mrs. Regina Piedade Noronha. Her authentic dedication of self to God from her young age made her to respond to the call of God which He had specially destined for her. She entered the Novitiate on 21st June 1960 at Secunderabad. She made her 1st Profession on 1st January 1963 and her Perpetual Profession on 3rd January 1969. She gave herself totally and selflessly wherever the Lord sent her.

She dedicated her life to Jesus with single minded devotion and served His people in the following communities:

1965 - 1970 in St. Theresa's College, Eluru, as a student
1970 - 1979 in St. Theresa's College, Eluru, as college Librarian
1979 - 1985 in St. Ann's Provincialate, Bolarum, as Provincial Secretary
1985 - 1991 in St. Theresa's College, Eluru, as Animator and college Librarian
1991 - 1998 as Provincial Councillor
1992 - 1998 in St. Ann's Provincialate, Bolarum, as Animator
1998 - 2000 in St. Ann's Convent, Bolarum, as Teacher
2000 - 2005 in St. Ann's Convent, Tivim, as Teacher
2005 - 2010 in St. Ann's Convent, Secunderabad, as Animator
2010 - 2012 in St. Ann's Provincialate, Bolarum, as a helper in the Community
2012 - 2013 In St. Ann's Provincialate, Bolarum, As Animator
2013 in St. Ann's Convent, Petbasheerabad, as a helper in the Community
2014 to till date in St. Ann's Home, Bolarum, for rest and treatment

Her entire life was a testimony of preparing to meet her Spouse, more so during her stay at St. Ann's Home. She had the good fortune of having Sister Sylvia, her elder sister, in the Congregation who visited her, as and when, time permitted. These visits, of love and concern gave her comfort. Just 40 days ago, on 5th January, 2019, Sr. Carmelita and Sr. Sylvia D'Souza lost their younger sister, Mrs. Annie. Since then Sr. Carmelita also had been keenly preparing for her good death.

Sr. Carmelita was sick with a few medical conditions from 2012. She was suffering from Goitre, Vertigo, Hyatius Hernia, Palpitation, Hypertension and Bilateral knee osteoporosis and was on

regular treatment. The symptoms of vertigo and palpitation were most disturbing at regular intervals which, very often created an anxiety and fear within her. On the evening of 9th February, 2019, onwards there was a halt from her daily schedule when she had a fall in the chapel after vespers. On 14th morning Fr. Thomas Stephen administered the sacrament of anointing of the sick to her.

On 15th February, 2019 around 8.30 p.m., I spoke to Sr. Carmelita over the phone. Encouraging her I told her that she would get alright and the next day I would visit her. She invited me to '*Come and see*'. Those were her last words I heard. After 10 minutes I got a call from Sr. Arokia Mary, the Animator of the Community, informing me that her health condition was deteriorating. Along with Sr. Reena Kallely, I rushed to St. Ann's Home finding Sr. Carmelita breathing heavily and senior Sisters of the Community were reciting the '*prayer for good death*' taken from 'Our Prayer Book' which she used to recite faithfully everyday.

The name Carmelita is the Spanish diminutive of CARMEL. Our Lady of Mount Carmel was her Patron Saint. Previous day of her departure to eternity, she enquired about the day, whether it was a Friday or Saturday. It seemed that it was her desire to go to God on Saturday. One of the promises of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is that, "*Whosoever wears the Scapular and dies on Saturday shall not suffer eternal fire.*" As her time was approaching to behold the Face of the Lord, she was adorned with a scapular taken from her cot. We could feel that her life was fading away gradually. We started reciting all four mysteries of Rosary. Towards the end of Glorious mystery, all of a sudden a roar of thunder cracked overhead and heavy rain followed. As she was breathing her last around 1.05 a.m. on Saturday, 16th February, 2019, we surrounded her, praying to the Lord to receive her soul. At that moment there was a bright glow on her face. Slowly rain also stopped. It was a sign that our Lord Jesus and Mother Mary came to receive her soul.

Sr. Carmelita had always united herself to the Lord through the daily Eucharist, Community and Personal Prayers which she never missed, even when she was sick. She took active part in all the Community activities. A deep longing for God and desire for His Kingdom was strong and constant in the life of our dearest Sr. Carmelita. She was a woman of strong faith and a person with religious vigour and zeal in spreading the mission of God. Sister had a childlike love for the Blessed Mother and a real trust in her powerful intercession. She was a person for others and conferred a special care for the sick.

She assumed great responsibilities in various positions, whether as Provincial Secretary, Provincial Councilor, Animator of the Communities, or Mistress of Tertians. In all these difficult roles, she emerged as committed, responsible and gentle. She was cheerful in her disposition and generous with her time and help.

As an Animator of various Communities, the Sisters experienced a great *mother* and *care-taker* in our dear Sister. All loved her because she was friendly, firm yet loving and concerned about every sister of the Community. She would always be going round the house to see if the things were going smoothly and checking to see if the surroundings were always kept clean. Her cordial dealing with the Community members and people who came in contact with her admired her incredible simplicity and integrated nobility of soul. She had a special love for the young Sisters and accompanied them in their formative journey. She used to keep all the records accurately and punctiliously.

In delivering the eulogy of Sr. Carmelita, Sr. Lilly Braggs pointed out to her life lived as religious, "*Sister Carmelita was a very prayerful, simple and sincere person with a gentle disposition. She was disciplined and orderly in her work. Sister was a woman of very few words, but she accomplished her task very diligently...Sister Carmelita was very clean and pure at heart. This was*

very evident in the way she kept herself, her things, how she chose her words, and how she went about doing her work. She always had a charming smile on her face and never failed in extending a helping hand to the needy. Sister maintained a very austere and frugal life.”

Sr. Caroline D’Silva, who lived with her in 2012-2013, in St. Ann’s Provincialate, Bolarum, says, *“I came to know her when she became my superior in the Provincialate. I was assisting her in her work. She used to address me as her guardian angel. She was very simple, generous and disciplined person, I learnt from her to be responsible in little things and to do the things perfectly. Though she was in her 70s, I used to admire her handwriting which was like pearls on the white background of the paper...She taught me many things like keeping the account, to write chronicles, to arrange for guests, etc.”*

Sr. Seema D’Souza shares her experience, *“With Sr. Carmelita I lived one year before I could come to Argentina as a missionary! That one year was homily where I enjoyed her presence. Just like a granny, she was pouring her love towards me. In the month of February 2019 when I went to visit her, she blessed me saying, 'you are a good missionary...I will not see you next time...' These words remained in my heart... I believe, along with my parents, I have many lovely souls, especially Sr. Carmelita who are praying for me.”*

From 16th to 18th February, Holy Eucharist was offered for her soul. On 18th at 10 a.m., during her funeral Mass in St. Ann’s Home, Bolarum, Fr. Leo S.J, our Confessor, Fr. Thumma Lourdu and Fr. Y.M. Joseph, the Former Parish Priests of St. Joseph’s Church, Bolarum, pointed out two important values of hers; *organized life and belongingness to God and others*. The Hall was overcrowded with many people; Mother Ernestine Fernandes, the Provincial Superior of Eastern Province, Sr. Charlotte Sequeira, the Provincial Superior of Western Province. Also Sisters from Central, Western, Eastern Provinces, Formees, Parishioners, Sisters from other Congregations, her former colleagues from Secunderabad, Eluru and Bolarum and co-workers attended the Funeral Mass.

I am ever grateful to Sr. Sylvia, who was very close to her, especially during those days where Sr. Carmelita was confined to bed after the fall. Let us share our deepest sympathy to our dearest Sr. Sylvia who lost her both the sisters within 40 days. I extend my heartfelt condolences to Mr. Augustine their brother-in-law, Mr. Cedric the Nephew who were present for the funeral to say adieu to Sr. Carmelita. It was indeed awesome to see that our Sisters from neighbouring communities and Formees who constantly prayed before the mortal remains of Sr. Carmelita day and night for three days. I am indebted to Sr. Arokia Mary, the Animator of the Community, Srs. Rosita Kurian and Swetha Raina D’Souza, who assisted Sr. Carmelita with utmost care till the end and Sisters of the community who stood by her with their powerful intercession at the time of her agony.

“Dear Sr. Carmelita, Your loving devotion and faithful service to the Lord has touched countless hearts and inspired so many souls. What a blessing you are, to all of us. May you now enjoy a reward well-deserved: the fullness of your consecration in heaven, one with your Divine Spouse. May you closely accompany each of us on this journey of fidelity and love.”

As we continue to offer our prayers of suffrages for Sr. Carmelita, may she soon behold the Face of God and live in His eternal bliss. Let us also be close in prayer with her dearest Sister, Sr. Sylvia D’Souza.

Affectionately,



Provincial Superior